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Security Council
Forty-ninth Year

Provisional

3481st Meeting
Thursday, 15 December 1994, 11.30 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Bakuramutsa	(Rwanda)
later:	Mr. Cárdenas	(Argentina)
Members:	Argentina	Mr. Cárdenas
	Brazil	Mr. Sardenberg
	China	Mr. Li Zhaoxing
	Czech Republic	Mr. Rovensky
	Djibouti	Mr. Olhaye
	France	Mr. Mérimée
	New Zealand	Mr. Keating
	Nigeria	Mr. Gambari
	Oman	Mr. Al-Khussaiby
	Pakistan	Mr. Marker
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Rwanda	Mr. Kagame
	Spain	Mr. Yañez-Barnuevo
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir David Hannay
	United States of America	Mr. Inderfurth

Agenda

The situation concerning Rwanda

94-87470 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 12.30 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation concerning Rwanda

The President (*interpretation from French*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations.

According to rule 20 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council,

> "Whenever the President of the Security Council deems that for the proper fulfilment of the responsibilities of the presidency he should not preside over the Council during the consideration of a particular question with which the member he represents is directly connected, he shall indicate his decision to the Council. The presidential chair shall then devolve, for the purpose of the consideration of that question, on the representative of the member next in English alphabetical order ..."

The Council will note that this provision places the matter entirely within the discretion of the President. Having considered the matter, I have decided that it would be appropriate for me to exercise the discretion given to the President under rule 20 and to vacate the Chair while this item is being discussed. I trust the Council will agree with me that this is the fair and proper way to proceed.

Consequently, in accordance with rule 20 and bearing in mind the Council's decision of 16 September 1994 (S/PRST/1994/55), I invite the representative of Argentina to take the presidential Chair for the purpose of the consideration of the item on our agenda today.

Mr. Cárdenas (Argentina) took the Chair.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): The first speaker is the Vice-President and Minister of Defence of Rwanda, His Excellency Major-General Paul Kagame. I welcome the Vice-President and Minister of Defence of Rwanda and invite him to make his statement.

Mr. Kagame (Rwanda): It is a great honour to address the Council, and it gives me an appropriate opportunity to extend warm thanks to the Security Council and its members for the support they gave my country during the difficult times through which we have passed. On behalf of my Government and the Rwandese people, I ask the Council to accept my presence here as a sincere sign of gratitude.

Our thanks are also addressed to the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, who did whatever he could in seeking solutions to the problems in my country and the region. With his help and wisdom, invaluable work was accomplished, although much still remains to be done.

The world will never forget the tragedy that struck our country, the worst to befall the human race since the Holocaust. We took our courage in our hands and fought to stop the genocide. Our thanks go to the Rwandese people, who stood almost alone, although we know that others were with us then, even if not physically. The defeated former Government forces destroyed everything in our country that they found in their path, killing and raping innocent civilians and looting whatever they could lift and carry off. The scars of the deep wounds inflicted on our civil society are still clearly visible throughout the country, a country we are determined, as a matter of urgency, to rebuild and give a new sense of justice and unity.

Our country has known difficult times before — although not as far back as the international media have put it. The recent genocide perpetrated by the forces of evil is an example of what can result when men act with sanctioned impunity: violence and more violence, refugees and more refugees, throughout the region.

Our neighbours have on their soil a mixture of new Rwandese refugees, a blend of armed killers, still in uniform, and the innocent population. Both groups are continually being misled by the very leaders who engineered the earlier and the most recent massacres. The criminals enjoy support and are strengthened by international assistance directed to them almost blindly because of inconsistent policies and the violation of laws and rules governing some United Nations bodies, such as the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, with regard to who is a refugee and who is not. Those criminals have once again taken the law into their own hands and have started to intimidate and kill

their own hands and have started to intimidate and kill ordinary, innocent people who are longing to return home.

The innocent refugees are clearly being held hostage, without the international community's being able — ironically — to stop it. We certainly want those hostages to be free and to return to their homeland. We are expecting them home, but await adequate means to ensure their safe return and resettlement.

It is deplorable that the intimidation being inflicted on those innocent people continues unchallenged. The strength of the criminal groups has been overestimated. We believe they can be disarmed decisively and relocated to places where they cannot pose an immediate security threat to Rwanda. We appeal to the international community, within the framework of the United Nations, to assist Zaire in dealing with this problem.

The strength of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR), which was reduced from 2,800 to 270 when the massacres in Rwanda started, has now reached a high figure of 5,600. Its present role is certainly appreciated, and that is the reason why my Government favoured the renewal of its mandate.

Within the country the Rwandese Government has made the following arrangements: a broad-based transitional government and National Assembly have been set up in the spirit of the Arusha Peace Agreement signed on 4 August 1993. In that same spirit we are glad to have welcomed back about 2,500 soldiers from the former Government forces, among them 70 officers, including senior officers; they are participating in reorientation programmes in various parts of the country. The programmes will soon be over, and their reintegration will be effective in a matter of weeks.

Our Government has done what it could to meet the immediate needs of the population, but we do not have adequate means to do so and to put into practice our principles of good governance based on justice for all Rwandese regardless of what used to divide us. We appeal to the international community to shoulder its responsibility to assist us in helping Rwandese to help themselves.

Delaying or refusing assistance to our Government will in the end diminish confidence and undermine the trust we expect from the Rwandese population. It would also increase pressure on the international donor community and keep the syndrome of "donor fatigue" alive. Time is pressing; the longer we wait, the worse the situation becomes.

We believe that Rwandese people should be helped to help themselves and should be given the chance to prove they can do it in the way most likely to achieve nationhood in justice, tolerance, reconciliation and unity.

Peace and stability in Rwanda and in the region depend upon what the international community can do and how swiftly it can do it. Sending the right strong signals to criminals and addressing the problem of impunity in the region certainly constitute the best solution for all of us. The international community has already understood that stability and the rule of law can stem only from taking proper measures to address the problem of impunity — and taking them swiftly enough to ensure justice, unity and the development of the idea of nationhood free from division and sectarianism.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): There are no further speakers for this meeting.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.